



THE CITY OF WHITTIER

Gateway to Western Prince William Sound

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**PORT & HARBOR COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY, JUNE 3, 2021
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING
6:00 p.m.**

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

City Clerk, Naelene Matsumiya, called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm

2. OPENING CEREMONY PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Naelene Matsumiya

3. ROLL CALL

Ed Hedges, Mark Mitchell, Dave Goldstein (Joined at 6:32), Cathy McCord, and Steven Bender

MOTION: Mark Mitchell made a motion to excuse Brad VonWichman, Dave Goldstein, and Arnie Arneson from tonight's meeting.

SECOND: Ed Hedges

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT

Dave Borg, Harbormaster

Jim Hunt, City Manager

Annie Reeves, Assistant City Manager

Naelene Matsumiya, City Clerk

PUBLIC PRESENT

Pat Reeves

Dave Dickason

4. APPROVAL OF REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

MOTION: Ed Hedges made a motion to approve the Regular Meeting agenda as is

SECOND: Cathy McCord

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Mark Mitchell made a motion to approve the May 6, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes as is.

SECOND: Ed Hedges

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously

6. HARBORMASTER AND CHAIRPERSON REPORT

Dave reported that most of his report will be discussed under New Business in terms of infrastructure. He reported the following:

- Summer season opening.
- Water running through majority of the Harbor.
- Let the fish out.
- McKay meters up and running 100%

Steven Bender commented stated that he didn't have anything substantial. He mentioned his meeting with Dave and encouraged the Commission to follow the new proposal for how the Commission should be doing things and thanked the Commission. He concluded by stating his excitement for working with the City Council.

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Delong Dock

Nothing new to report

B. Harbor Phase 3

Nothing new to report

9. NEW BUSINESS

A. Harbor Infrastructure Issues

Dave Borg presented the issues by listing them. First issue was the Travel Lift. He summarized that when an individual came down to replace the tires on the lift, the rings that hold the tire bead to the rim had completely rotted out as well as the safety wire. He stated that he did his research, and each ring (2 for each tire) is \$1,000 a piece and additional cost for the safety wires. He reported that he did not go forward in purchasing the parts as he wanted to bring it up to the Commission for discussion. He said he spoke with Scott Korbe and they're looking at an estimated \$10,000-\$15,000 in repairs not including hoses and hydraulics. He told the Commission that he presents these issues to the Commission because he is looking at a \$20,000 investment in an equipment that only brought the Harbor \$30,000 last year and less in the years prior. He reminded that the dock structure that utilizes the lift was downgraded from 30 tons to 15 and he sees a pattern of slowly degrading equipment based on age and depreciation. He asked for guidance for how he should go forward because he does not have the money for this in the budget.

Mark Mitchell asked what the cost would be for the repair of the dock.

Dave responded that his best estimate is between 5-10 million dollars because construction

prices are going through the roof right now. He said that 5-8 million dollars' worth of infrastructure is a rough estimate to build back like it is now. He asked, do we spend \$20,000 on a 30 ton lift that's only capable of 15? He said it was a huge liability and the City saves money in the fact that they're not operating the equipment but we wouldn't have insure it either.

Mark Mitchell asked what would happen to the dock and Dave responded that it can still be utilized as a crane dock, but also the City Dock crane needs a hydro rebuild on the main cylinder which will be close to \$2,000-\$3,000 and the lift also needs a seal replaced so looking around \$4,000 to replace.

Dave asked the Commission about services the Harbor provides and what the Harbor wants to provide and what should be provided? He said the main ones he can think of were, water, power, moorage, restrooms, showers etc. But he also keeps the users of this equipment in mind when discussing these issues because it is equipment that is utilized in the winter as well. He brought up the floating breakwater and moorage inspection on that and says it's important to get an inspection on the moorage chains that hold the breakwater in place. He brought up the skiff and how it had almost sunk in the harbor due to holes from corrosion in the hull. He had Eddy take a look at it and he recommended re-skinning the entire thing and a whole rebuild. He stated that the harbor uses the skiff to tug boats though the harbor and go out to feed fish. He threw a price tag of \$30,000 to replace the boat if the harbor wants to maintain that service to the public. He brought up the pump-out cart and Gino's efforts in repairing it. He said that the pump-out works fine in the parking lot but not so well on the docks. He mentioned a Kiko Pump replacement, a hand operated pump that can be wheeled down to the docks and estimated it to cost around \$8,000-\$11,000 that he can support because it's a clean harbor situation. He wouldn't want people pumping into the harbor which they will end up doing if there isn't a service that the Harbor can provide. He brought up the Smitty's Cove launch repair and he has bids on that, that he can't disclose. He's looking at spending anywhere between \$75,000-\$150,000 to repair that as it should be. He has a bid right now for a fish cleaning station estimated for \$11,000-\$15,000. Harbor building needs some repairs as well, the back door specifically and he's looking at \$1,200 to fix it and the floor rotting out in the second floor due to wind blowing water in and soaking the floor. He's looking to refresh the bathrooms around the harbor waterfront area as well and he's looking at a price range of \$4,500. Dave mentioned striping and signage but those are currently being worked on. He stated last thing he wanted to discuss was the trash removal situation down at the harbor. He believes this will be a hot topic situation and encouraged the trash discussion be punted to the City Council and have them manage that discussion so as to get to a resolution a lot quicker. He asked how he should move forward with the information that was presented to the Commission.

Mark Mitchell stated that the skiff was a big priority as it offers an important service and have it be presented to the Council through a resolution because the harbor needs a replacement as soon as possible.

Steven Bender weighed in and stated his support to replace the harbor skiff. He asked if the Harbormaster was looking for a boat with the same dimensions or a completely different boat altogether. Dave responded that there were some standard changes, but the size is ideal. He updated that he found an appropriate skiff and given the time-sensitivity for the matter, hopefully a greenlight emergency purchase from the City Manager would be appropriate.

Mark Mitchell weighed in on the Travel Lift repairs and options around town. Ed Hedges stated that there are some boats in the harbor that require the Travel Lift. He believes that without a Travel Lift, the harbor is going to have very few people working on their boats in

Whittier which means we're going to be losing more customers.

Dave clarified that in terms of working on boats, there are still options, but he is unsure Whittier is the best place to have a boat yard and what customers Whittier wants to attract.

Steven mentioned the grid and it's limited access due to tide and/or availability and shared his concerns from a consumer standpoint. He shared that if Whittier limits their services, Whittier will continue to lose boaters which will negatively affect revenue through property tax and limited services.

Mark responded to Steven and said there is limited space in Whittier in terms of infrastructure to work on boats. Commission discussed the effect of the Travel Lift not being operational.

Jim Hunt weighed in and said that the administration and Council has been addressing deferred maintenance for some time. He stated that there is no where to build houses let alone infrastructure to offer for boat repair and that the City's water rates were raised just last year since 2006. He said yes, the City can dig deep into their reserves and repair and replace equipment, but financially, the City has to look at what's going to be returned. He agrees that the Travel Lift needs to be replaced eventually but it is not cheap and the City needs to think of a plan b.

Dave asked the Commission if harbor continues to subsidize the lifting of boats? He can bring forward a cost/benefit analysis would be appropriate for what numbers the lift brought in as well as the yard, but it's a lot of money for very little in return. He gave the options to bring information to the Commission or go forward with the recommendation to the City Council to ask for funding.

Mark asked if there is any place the City owns that can be utilized as a boat yard for repair.

Dave said what we have is what we have and that there is no place that will be environmentally safe for a boat yard, to his knowledge.

Steven stated that throwing a lot of money towards something that's been neglected for so long is not the right thing, economically, to do at this time. He stated that perhaps the Commission is expressing concerns because it is another thing that Whittier is losing. He stated that the money that was going to be put towards the Travel Lift can be put somewhere else instead.

Mark agreed. He continued his argument about the lack of land for boat repair. Steven added his concerns about the lack of land in Whittier. Dave Goldstein mentioned that facilities at the head of the bay would be ideal and to look for interim solutions in the meantime. He offered areas.

Dave Borg stated that he isn't against it, but there are definitely bigger fish to fry. He asked the Commission for recommendations to the Council. The Commission recommended resolutions for the following as priorities:

1. Replacing the harbor skiff
2. Repairing the City crane dock
3. Moving forward with what to do with the Travel Lift
4. Restrooms restoration

5. Discussion for city-wide trash removal

10. MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

Mark Mitchell mentioned the old gangway and ways that land could be utilized and possible land-permitting for generating revenue for a seasonal type business. Commission discussed what Mark envisioned and Mark gave options for retail space. Annie spoke about cost to have utilities connected to that area, structural integrity, and the cost/benefit of the area. She stated that it isn't impossible to lease it, but it has to be an ongoing conversation with several different department heads.

Mark said it can start off small and it will bring business to Whittier. Dave Goldstein agreed that it will be beneficial for when the cruise ships come back into Whittier. Mark Mitchell offered the idea of adding a telescope that looks across the canal. Conversation for options ensued.

11. COMMISSION DISCUSSION

Steven Bender asked Dave Borg is the Commission covered everything at tonight's meeting. Dave responded that yes, the Commission offered good recommendations, but at the end of the day a very comprehensive look at infrastructure and services we want to provide and make what we have better and if it doesn't make sense, the City needs to readdress what we're doing and the expense with it all.


12. CITIZENS DISCUSSION

None

13. ADJOURNMENT:

Meeting was adjourned at 7:07 pm.

ATTEST:



Naelene Matsumiya
City Clerk



Vice Chair Mark Mitchell for Steven Bender
Steven Bender
Commission Chairperson